



Year 7 New Starter *Information Booklet*

Message from the Headteacher

Dear New Year 7 students,

It was an absolute pleasure to meet you all today! I hope that you all had a first-class experience and cannot wait to join us in September.

I know that myself, Miss Dance and every member of the Fort Pitt team are very much looking forward to you starting with us. More than that though, we are excited to be an integral part of your life for the next 7 years; it will be a real privilege to watch you grow and flourish.

I appreciate that your transition day has probably answered many of your questions, but we thought it was also a good idea to put this booklet together for your parents/carers, so you both have a quick guide to some key information about life here at Fort Pitt.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a fantastic summer break. Enjoy your last few days of primary school, cherish friendships and memories you have made there, but look forward to the beginning of your next adventure with us.

We'll see you on **Tuesday 2nd September at 8.25am!**

Ms S. Hirons



Fort Pitt Values

Our Fort Pitt values underpin everything that we do. We aim to mould young leaders of the future who have a fantastic education and are well-rounded individuals who will strive for excellence and never give up.



Term Dates 2025 - 2026

Term 1	Tuesday 2 nd September	Year 7 only in school
	Wednesday 3 rd September	All students in school
	Monday 15 th September	School Photographs
	Thursday 9 th October	Open Evening – Y7s act as guides (early close)
	Friday 17 th October	House Arts and Last day of Term 1
Term 2	Monday 3 rd November	Start of Term 2
	Friday 28 th November	Trust Inset day – School closed to students
	Wednesday 17 th December	Christmas Concert Evening
	Friday 19 th December	Last day of Term 2 (early closure 12pm)
Term 3	Monday 5 th January	Start of Term 3
	Friday 13 th February	Last day of Term 3
Term 4	Monday 23 rd February	Inset day – School closed to students
	Tuesday 24 th February	Start of Term 4
	Thursday 26 th March	Spring concert Evening
	Thursday 2 nd April	Last day of Term 4 (early closure 12pm)
Term 5	Monday 20 th April	Start of Term 5
	Monday 4 th May	Early May Bank Holiday
	Friday 22 nd May	Last day of Term 5
Term 6	Monday 1 st June	Start of Term 6
	Tuesday 23 rd June	Y7 Parents' Evening
	Friday 26 th June	Inset day – School closed to students
	Thu 9 th to Sat 11 th July	School Production
	Monday 13 th August	Last day of Term 6

Timings of the School Day

Students may go to the canteen or library before school	07:30 - 08:20am
Earliest time to leave canteen/library to go to Tutor Rooms	from 08:10
Registration/Assembly	08:25 - 08:45
Period 1	08:45 - 09:35
Period 2	09:40 - 10:30
Break	10:30 - 10:50
Period 3	10.50 - 11:40
Period 4	11:45 - 12:35
Period 5	12.40 - 13:30
Lunch and clubs	13:30 - 14:10
Period 6	14:10 - 15:00
Library available for independent study (Mon - Thurs)	15:00 - 16:30
Variety of enrichment clubs (Sports fixtures maybe later)	until 16:30pm

For your child's safety, we ask that students not be on school site before 7:30am, at which time they may use the canteen or library until 8:10am when they can make their way to their form rooms.

At the end of the school day, students also have unsupervised access to the library until 16:30 should they wish to do some work.

All students are expected to be off site by 16:30.

Key Staff for Year 7

Pastoral Team



Mr Ost
Deputy
Headteacher (DSL)



Mrs Bambling
Assistant
Headteacher



Miss Dance
Head of Year 7



Mrs Cullen

Student Support Managers



Mrs Brown



Mrs Wilshire-Hale

Wellbeing Lead

Form Tutors

7L1
Mrs Emeh

7L2
Mr Finney

7L3
Mrs Smith

7L4
Mrs King

7L5
Miss Morson

Home and School Communications

As a school, we know that for students to be as successful as possible, it is vital that close links are fostered between home and school, therefore we encourage parents/carers to take an active part in their child's education.

Please ensure you:

- Download and sign up for the Arbor Parent app. You can use this to check and ensure they are completing their homework to the best of their ability. The app can also be used to check on your child's attendance, achievement points, behaviour log and progress reports.
- Check your e-mails regularly, as most correspondence from school about events and information will be sent electronically. We know that a few of you will want to retain a paper correspondence, and we can do this for those people who do not have access to e-mail.
- Attend parents' evening to meet our teachers and discuss your child's progress with them.
- Check your child's [Learning Journeys on our website](#) so you are aware of what they are currently learning in their various lessons.

Your child will receive 3 progress reports over the year, which will be sent home via the Arbor Parent App. It is important that you take the time to sit down and talk to your child about their progress report.

If you have any concerns, please note the following:

- Your child's Form Tutor will be your first point of contact for any day-to-day queries or concerns, and you can also contact our student support managers in the Student Hub. We are always happy to hear from you by email, phone or letter – you can also make an appointment to see someone in person.
- If you have a subject specific concern, please contact the relevant teacher or Head of Department.
- Any greater concerns either academic or pastoral can then be raised with your child's Head of Year.

We are also very keen to hear about all students' achievements, so do let Form Tutors and Heads of Year know of any successes they have achieved outside of school so we can celebrate them too.

Please notify us of any change in your contact information via the Arbor Parent App or by emailing office@fortpitt.medway.sch.uk.

Home and School Communications

The Fort Pitt website

Please visit our school website at www.fortpitt.co.uk. If you go to our menu, you will find important information about school dates, routines, procedures and policies which you should familiarise yourself with.

On our school website, you can find details about:

- Our absence procedures
- Our school policies
- Expectations on uniform and jewellery
- ParentPay
- The EduLink app for parents
- A list of staff (you can e-mail them directly by clicking on the staff name)
- Learning Journeys for all Years so that you can follow what your child is learning
- Information about the Beyond Schools Trust

Social Media

At Fort Pitt we like to celebrate success and let parents know what has been going on at school, we do this through our social media accounts, so please follow us. You can find links to our social media accounts at the bottom of our website.

Parent consent for use of student images

We take the issue of child safety very seriously, and this includes the use of images of students. Including images of students in school publications, on the school website and in the local press can be motivating for the students involved and provide a good opportunity to promote what is going on in the school.

We have already asked that parents/carers consent to the school taking and using photographs and images of their children. These may include those taken at sports and charity events. We will never include the full name of the student alongside an image.

Contacting the School

T: 01634 842359

E: office@fortpitt.medway.sch.uk

Attendance

Absences

Safeguarding of students is paramount, and it is essential we are aware of the whereabouts of students who are not in school. Parents/carers must contact us on the first day of any absence and every day thereafter that the student is absent. There are 3 possible options for you to choose from to report your child absent:

1. Via the EduLink App. Documents or photos can also be uploaded to show appointments or medical certificates.
2. By contacting the main reception on 01634 842359 and following instructions on how to report your child absent,
3. Via e-mail at absence@fortpitt.co.uk

If you do not contact us, we will contact you to ascertain the reason for the absence. Furthermore, an explanatory note or e-mail should be sent to the school on the student's return.

Absences, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given, will be marked as "unauthorised". This includes keeping students away from school unnecessarily, truancy, absences which have not been properly explained and students who arrive at school too late to receive a mark in the register.

Lates

Students who are late to school and arrive after the school gate is shut at 8:25am must sign in with Mrs Benavente, our attendance officer.

Illness during the school day

If a student feels unwell during the school day, they should come to Reception where they will be assessed by a qualified first aider and contact home will be made where necessary.

It is vital that students do not contact home about illness, they must instead follow the school guidelines. We ask parents to please not respond to such calls or messages by coming to school. Instead, please contact Reception who will assess the situation and contact home if the student needs to be picked up.

Holidays

Holidays during term time will not be authorised except at the discretion of the Headteacher in extremely exceptional circumstances. If a holiday is taken without permission, then it will be classified as unauthorised absence and subject to consideration of a penalty notice being served.

Our attendance policy is available for you to view in full on our school website.

Behaviour and Equipment

Behaviour

At Fort Pitt, we are proud that our students are known for their outstanding behaviour. We have very high expectations of our students, as we know from experience that a school community based on kindness, respect, honesty and inclusion is more conducive to student success and happiness. There are times where students will make mistakes: they are still children and this is part of the learning process. However, we expect our students to own up to mistakes so a pathway forward can be found. Dishonesty is not tolerated and will lead to harsher sanctions should this occur.

For many of our students, the transition to secondary school often coincides with the onset of puberty. Among other things, they can experience heightened emotions, a change of attitude and difficulties with social relationships. This is a challenging time for students and can sometimes lead to friendship issues, which can be misinterpreted as bullying. A key role for both school and parents/carers is to help students deal with changing friendship groups and reflect on arguments from different sides, so that we help them become more resilient, independent and prepare them for life after school. The school pastoral team (Form tutors, Student Support Managers, and Heads of Year) will support the students from a school perspective.

Anti-bullying

Bullying is not tolerated in any shape or form.

Equipment for the first day

- A pencil case with pen, pencil, ruler, eraser, sharpener, colouring pencils/felt tips round-ended scissors and glue stick.
- Reading book
- A rough notebook
- A breaktime snack and packed lunch
- A water bottle
- A mobile phone (loaded with the Student Arbor App)

On their first day, students should come to school in their Fort Pitt Uniform. During their first Computer Science class, we will help them log into their Student Arbor app where they will then have access to their timetable and homework planner. Should your child not have a mobile phone, they will be given access to a computer in school to access the web version of Arbor app. Students will also be issued with their canteen fobs during form time, which can then be used in the canteen once your ParentPay account has been activated (account and login details were given to you at the information evening on 3 July). The various lessons they attend that day will hand out their new exercise books.

Uniform Expectations

Uniform and Jewellery

All students in Years 7 - 11 wear the school uniform and are expected to take pride in their appearance at all times, including the journey to and from school. Please see our school website for more information about our uniform and jewellery expectations. Should you have any questions or queries, please contact your child's tutor or Head of Year.

All uniform is available from School Time in Chatham: telephone number **01634 831684**. Details about specific clothing for PE are also available from our website or School Time.

Fort Pitt Grammar School also has a selection of 'pre-loved' uniform available from the school office. Please telephone 01634 842359 or email: office@fortpitt.medway.sch.uk

Please ensure all items of uniform and property are named – it helps us identify who lost and found items belong to!

Mobile Phones and other electronic devices

Mobile phones may be used before registration, at break, at lunch and after school (unless in a revision session, other teacher led session or detention). At all other times, mobile phones are expected to remain unseen and on silent – including during movement time between lessons.

Earphones/AirPods and other personal electronic devices should not be used around the school site. These should be put away before entering the school site. If these rules are broken, the devices will be confiscated and should be collected by the student at the end of the day from Reception.

Personal electronic devices must not be used during lessons, unless permission is granted by a member of staff, and this must only be for learning or homework related tasks. If this rule is broken, the device will be confiscated and should be collected from Reception by the student at the end of the day.

All mobile phone use must be responsible. Any misuse will be taken very seriously.

Multiple breaches of these rules will result in a mobile phone/ electronic device ban.

Personal Property

Personal Property

The School cannot take responsibility for the loss of property.

Mobile phones and other valuables are the responsibility of the student.

If a student should require to bring small sums of money into school they should keep this on them at all times or it should be locked in a locker. On occasions such as PE lessons, students must hand in the purse to the appropriate member of staff for safe-keeping.

Large sums of money should not be brought into school.

Lockers

During Term 1, students will be offered the opportunity to loan a locker for the duration of their time at Fort Pitt (returned at the end of Year 11). This can be used for PE kits, books and other school equipment to help lighten the load of their bags. Lockers are loaned at the responsibility of the student and should not be shared or used to store food. Lockers are allocated only after the loan payment of £4 is made via ParentPay **and** the student has signed up to the terms and conditions of the loan agreement (a link will be emailed to their student email account). Lockers will be allocated during September

Should your child forget their locker key and need access to their locker, permission will be sought from a parent/carer to cut the padlock off (or break the lock in cases of key locks) at a cost of £4. A replacement padlock will then be required, which can either be purchased through the school or a padlock supplied from home. Lockers should be securely locked at all times and the school cannot take responsibility for issues relating to unsecured lockers.

If there are any issues with the locker at any time, please report it to the Student Hub.

IT Resources and login information

Your child will be using a range of software packages during their time with us. Students are encouraged, where possible, to use both home and school ICT resources to develop their work. They will be taught in their Computer Science lessons how to transfer work between home and school and how to save work in the correct format where necessary.

As part of our licensing agreement with Microsoft, all students are entitled to a free copy of Microsoft Office 365, which includes Microsoft Office packages, and can be installed on up to 5 devices (details can be found below).

Students have one login and one password which works for both our computer system and email system. Their login details will be issued to them in their first Computer Science lesson.

How does my child check their email?

On a school pc or laptop: Open outlook from the start menu or follow the online option below from any computer with internet access: Go to <http://portal.office.com> and login using their email address and school password, then click the Outlook button.

On a phone: Add a new email account to your mail app of choice, they have an Office 365 account. Use your child's full email address and school password to login. If it asks for the mail server enter *outlook.office365.com*.

How does my child transfer work from home to school and back again?

You get free access to a massive 1tb of cloud storage with Microsoft OneDrive. Access your files anywhere from anything – therefore it would be advisable to avoid using USB sticks which are unreliable, breakable and easily lost.

Go to <http://portal.office.com> and login using your child's email address and school password, then click the OneDrive button. You can find a OneDrive client on your PC or download it for your Mac. You can also install a OneDrive app on your phone or tablet.

All your office apps, once linked to your school account, will allow you to save to OneDrive. The online versions automatically do.

Install the Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams) for free!

Go to <http://portal.office.com>, login using your child's email address and school password, then click the Install button on the right.

Access the online versions of the Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams) for free

Go to <http://portal.office.com>, login using your child's email address and school password, then click the icons on the left.

How can my child access the school Wi-Fi?

Students have access to a student Wi-Fi network when in school. Details of how to access this will be given with their login details during their first Computer Science lesson. Please note that for safeguarding reasons the student Wi-Fi does have content restrictions.

We use Microsoft TEAMS as our VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), which students can download for free and use with their normal school log-on details. They will be taught how to use TEAMS in their Computer Science lessons

ICT Acceptable Use Policy for Students

We have developed a policy which gives advice and instruction to students on their use of ICT at school. This has been set up with input from students, parents and staff and is reviewed annually. Students and parents are asked to sign and return this at the start of Year 7. Students are also required to accept this policy each time they use ICT facilities within the school.

Student and Parent Arbor Apps

Arbor is used as both our parent and student information system. The app can be installed onto any apple or android mobile phone and tablet device via your usual app store.

Students will be issued with their login details and a demonstration of the app during their first day Computer Science lesson. We recommend that you download the app onto your child's device in preparation for their first day.

School Transport

For all those who pay council tax to MEDWAY COUNCIL:

Free School Transport

Medway Council Admissions Team assesses all students to identify if they are entitled to a free bus pass. The criteria to be met is that you must live over 3 miles from school or be on a low income. Further information on the scheme and application process can be accessed [here](#).

Arriva Child and Student Saver Tickets – if not eligible for a free buss pass

Child Saver Tickets are available for anyone up to and including school year 11. A Student Saver Ticket is available for anyone aged 16+ in full time education. Both can be paid by monthly direct debit to help spread the cost, with the option of a mobile or physical bus pass. The pass can also be used at other times, not just for travel to/from school.

The ticket can be accessed via www.arrivabus.co.uk/monthlytickets or, by scanning the QR code below



Medway Youth Pass – if not eligible for a free bus pass

Young people who live in Medway can apply for a Medway Youth Pass, giving access to discounted travel rates on local bus services. This is valid for 3 academic years or until the child finished Year 11 at a cost of £15.00. Applications can be made online at [medway_youth_pass](#). ***To complete the online application process you will need a debit card and a photo of your child. Passes can take up 4 weeks to be posted, so please apply in time to ensure that your pass is received by September.***

For those who pay Council Tax to KENT COUNTY COUNCIL:

KCC Travel Saver (Week-day bus travel in Kent for 11-16-year olds)

Applications can be made online at [KCC Travel Saver - Kent County Council](#)

The application must be received by **10 August 2025** to ensure that the bus pass will be available for collection at Fort Pitt Grammar School on the first day of term. Passes for applications received after this date are unlikely to be at school on the first day of term and you will have to pay your own non-refundable bus fares until your pass is ready. If there are issues with buses, (not arriving, full or unreliable) please contact the company directly to make them aware.

Other Important Information

School Council & Student Voice

We have a vibrant and lively student-led School Council that aims to speak on behalf of the school community. We have one meeting every term. Each tutor group elects a representative and they attend meetings to discuss items that have been suggested by their tutor group. Our Student Voice contributes to many important changes within our school community, including a wide range of areas such as teaching and learning. Student welfare items, such as environment & the canteen, are regular agenda items. There are also a number of student voice opportunities throughout the year and every student can join our various steering groups.

ParentPay/Cashless school

We are a cashless school, and as such, all payments for school trips, activities, and the canteen must be made online via a secure website called ParentPay. You will be able to keep an electronic record of all payments made through ParentPay. Fort Pitt will send you a guide and login details for ParentPay, whether you are new to the system or already have a ParentPay account. Should you need any assistance with this system, please contact the school office and we will endeavour to help you as quickly as possible.

School Meals

Our school canteen offers a choice of meat and vegetarian dishes daily, along with a selection of jacket potatoes, paninis, pasta pots, sandwiches, and a range of sweet and savoury snacks. Students can pay for their food via a fob, which will be issued and activated on their first day in school in September. Students' accounts can be topped up as needed via ParentPay, and parents can view details of what their child has bought each day.

For students having free school meals, the allowance will be added daily on to their account, but any remaining money will not be carried over to the following day. The allowance entitles your child to the equivalent cost of a main meal with pudding a lunchtime, any additional purchases during the day will be charged to your ParentPay account. We therefore recommend that you supply an additional snack for your child each day and track your ParentPay account regularly for expenditure.

You can apply for free school meals via <https://www.fortpitt.co.uk/information-fsm>

Alternatively, students may bring a packed lunch, which they are free to eat in the school grounds or in designated areas when the weather is bad.

We also have many water fountains around the Fort Pitt school site, so students can quickly and easily re-fill their bottles during the school day. Water bottles are allowed in all rooms except the Computer Science rooms and Science Labs. It is vital that students carry a water bottle with them each day.

Other Important Information

Student Enrichment Fund

This is used to pay for a number of activities, ventures and facilities in school over and above statutory provision. It pays for and subsidises a wide variety of visits, visitors and enrichment activities. It is a voluntary contribution of £39/year, which is the equivalent of £1/week. If you choose to contribute, it is payable termly (£13/big term) or as a one-off payment. As a Registered Charity we are able to reclaim tax donations made by tax payers under the Gift Aid scheme, which can increase your donations by 25p for every £1. The Student Enrichment Fund is payable via ParentPay, once you have activated your Fort Pitt account.

Music at Fort Pitt

In addition to timetabled class Music lessons, there are opportunities for every student to learn a musical instrument while at school, and we hope you will make the most of this offer. (Please see the Music booklet contained in your pack).

There are tutors for violin, viola, cello, double bass, piano, flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, trumpet, trombone, guitar, drums, voice and keyboard. Lessons on some of the orchestral instruments are subsidised by the Dynamics Medway Music Hub. Students receive lessons rotated throughout the school day so that the same class lesson is not interrupted each week.

If you would like to register interest now to set up lessons on a particular instrument or voice, please email Mrs King (cking@fortpitt.medway.sch.uk). Alternatively, students will be able to ask their Music teacher for details and an application form at the beginning of term. It is possible to start lessons at any point during the school year.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities at lunch-times and after school, and hope there will be something for every student to get involved in. Activities include music groups (Voiceworks Choir, Year 7 Choir, Recorder Group, Single Reed Group, Ukulele Club, Jazz Band, Orchestra and Flute Choir), art and textile clubs, the debating society, science club, various sports groups (Netball, Football, Handball, Badminton and Dance), book club, computing club, creative writing club, chess club, film club and our drama group WestEnders. Students should keep an eye on their notices as new activities are added regularly and our timetable of groups changes in each term.

We hold concerts throughout the year which showcase the achievements of each of our music groups and a summer theatre production, so parents/carers can come along and support their child's interests.



A **Beyond** ACADEMY
SCHOOLS TRUST

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